



# Annual Report

2017

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## Contextual Information

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### School profile

Sunshine Christian School was founded in 1982 by a group of committed Christians, across denominations, who desired to provide a Christian choice in education in the western suburbs of Melbourne. In 2004 the school became a member of Lutheran Education Australia. Our sponsoring church is St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Footscray.

Sunshine Christian School seeks to provide a rich and supportive education within a Christian framework for students in grades Prep to 6. A deep care and concern for all members of the school community provides the foundation of our school. We have small class sizes and an overall enrolment level in the mid-90s. The curriculum of the school is based on the Australian Curriculum and the Christian Studies Curriculum Framework (published by Lutheran Education Australia). It embraces the many languages, cultures and gifts of our students.

A positive and stimulating environment provides students with the opportunity to develop across the wellbeing domains. In addition to a strong Literacy, Numeracy and Humanities focus, students undertake specialist programs in Music, Visual Art, Physical Education, Christian Studies, Science and LOTE (Auslan). Students and staff seek to live out our school motto 'Living as children of the light' and display our school values at all times.

The dedicated staff of Sunshine Christian School support and nurture our students to achieve personal academic excellence, make positive contributions to the community and cope well with the demands placed upon them in further study and beyond.

# Our vision, mission and aims

## Vision

Living as children of the light - A community loving God, loving others, loving learning

## Mission

- To provide a quality Christian education in the Lutheran tradition which assists parents to enable their children to grow and flourish as lifelong learners
- To work towards individual and community wellbeing and wholeness – cognitive, social, emotional, physical and spiritual
- To engender the responsibility to serve others, the appreciation of cultural inclusivity and to foster the individual God-given talents of all in our community
- To keep enrolment at Sunshine Christian School available to all, regardless of financial status, cultural background or academic ability

## Values

We seek to operate by the values shared by all Lutheran schools in Australia, as expressed in the Lifelong Qualities of Learners document lived out in our context and community. These values are:

- Love
- Justice
- Compassion
- Forgiveness
- Service
- Courage
- Humility
- Hope
- Quality
- Appreciation

## Aims

- Provide students with a comprehensive program of education that is conducive to the development of their talents and skills for responsible Christian living and service
- Encourage students to strive for excellence in learning according to individual ability
- Help students value themselves as persons created in the image of God, redeemed by Christ, and made members of his body, the church, and to express their new life in Christ in their relationship with God and others
- Include as a core part of the program, a Christian Studies curriculum which has been developed deliberately and consciously from the perspective of confessional Lutheranism
- Provide an alternative to a secularistic, humanistic philosophy and practice of education
- Promote the spiritual life and development of the school community through regular worship,

study of the Scriptures and pastoral care

- Assist parents in the fulfilment of their God-given responsibilities to their children
- Assist the State in providing it with responsible citizens equipped to contribute positively to the community

### **Statement of Democratic Principles**

- Sunshine Christian School is committed to the principles of a liberal democracy.
- We believe in an accountable, democratically elected government.
- We respect and observe the rule of law, and believe that no person is above the law.
- We believe in equal rights for all before the law, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, gender or other attributes.
- We believe not only in the freedom of religion, but also the need to practice tolerance and understanding of others' beliefs.
- We believe in the value of freedom of speech and freedom of association, but also acknowledge that we have the responsibility not to abuse this freedom.
- We believe in the values of openness and tolerance, and value and respect all members of the school community regardless of background.

# Teaching and Learning Statement

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We believe that every student is a unique creation of God with the potential to learn and develop their God-given gifts and talents. Every child has strengths as well as needs, and as such our educational programs are designed to be relevant and personalised. The curriculum provides students with the understanding and skills necessary to equip them as responsible citizens in a complex and changing world.

The school follows the Australian Curriculum as its core curriculum. The daily program incorporates lessons in Literacy and Numeracy, while Humanities, Health, Physical Education, Science, Music, Visual Arts, LOTE (Language Other Than English) and Christian Studies are included in weekly teaching. Information and Communication Technologies are integrated throughout the curriculum, as are the Australian Curriculum general capabilities (literacy, numeracy, ICT capability, critical and creative thinking, personal and social responsibility, ethical understanding and intercultural understanding) and Australian Curriculum Cross-Curriculum Priorities (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia and Sustainability). The school's Christian faith is seen across all teaching and learning and is supported by Lutheran Education Australia's Christian Studies Curriculum Framework.

## Essential agreements about teaching and learning

The following statements underpin all teaching and learning at Sunshine Christian School:

- Every child is a unique creation of God and every child can learn
- Learning is nurtured by positive, supportive and committed student-teacher relationships
- Every child deserves at least one year of progress for one year of input
- Learning is accessible to all
- Learning outcomes and success criteria are made clear to students
- Feedback is timely, meaningful and supportive
- Teaching and learning are informed by best practice and driven by student data and analysis
- The school curriculum is founded on our school values and the LEA Christian Studies Curriculum Framework in partnership with the Australian Curriculum

These agreements manifest themselves across eight domains:

1. Teaching and learning which views students as individuals in a community
2. Excellence in teaching practice
3. Evidence based teaching and learning
4. Relevant, targeted and rigorous curriculum
5. Targeted resourcing
6. A community of lifelong learners
7. Meaningful relationships with partnering organisations
8. School-wide commitment to continual improvement

# School Workforce

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## Staff qualifications

All teachers are registered with the Victorian Institute for Teaching and meet registration requirements.

The Lutheran Church of Australia believes that educators in Lutheran schools should have sufficient theological understanding to uphold and promote the Lutheran character of their schools. The majority of teachers at Sunshine Christian School hold teacher accreditation with the Lutheran Church of Australia while the remaining staff members are currently working towards accreditation. Two teachers are fully accredited as teachers and leaders of Christian Studies.

Non-teaching staff hold a current Working with Children Check and are qualified to fulfil their duties competently in their areas of expertise.

All members of staff are annually trained in the Child Safety Standards, First Aid (including Anaphylaxis, Asthma and CPR), Mandatory Reporting and the Lutheran Church of Australia's Valuing Safe Communities Policies and Procedures.

The table below provides a summary of the formal qualifications of teachers.

Qualification	Number
<b>Diploma</b>	4
<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	5
<b>Postgraduate certificate or diploma</b>	3
<b>Master's Degree</b>	1

The table below provides a summary of the formal qualifications of non-teaching staff.

Qualification	Number
<b>Diploma</b>	2
<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	5
<b>Postgraduate certificate or diploma</b>	1
<b>Master's Degree</b>	1

## Workforce composition

In 2017 there were 5.4 FTE teaching staff and 4.14 FTE office and program support staff employed creating a total workforce of 14 people. There were 0 indigenous employees.

At the conclusion of the 2017 school year the workforce composition at Sunshine Christian School consisted of:

1.0	Acting Principal
4.4	Primary School Teachers
1.67	Administration staff
1.83	Classroom support staff
0.64	Pastoral support staff

In addition to core teaching competency in Literacy, Numeracy and Humanities, the teaching staff of Sunshine Christian School utilize specialist teaching skills in areas including Music, Visual Art, Library, Technology, Drama, Christian Studies, Science and Physical Education.

Staff retention remains high, with all staff enjoying strong fellowship and appreciation of each other's gifts, talents and contributions. Teaching staff retention in 2017 was 86%. Our school support staff, made up of 6 part time staff members, experienced a 50% retention rate.

## **Professional Learning**

Professional Development in 2017 was driven by annual goals as set out in the school's strategic plan. All school staff have individual professional learning plans which are supported by school leadership.

Specific professional learning took place in the following areas:

- Child Safety Standards (all staff)
- Interpret anaphylaxis policies and procedures (all staff)
- Anaphylaxis & Asthma Refresher Training (all staff)
- Provide Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (all staff)
- THRASS Mastery Course (1 staff)
- Psychological First Aid & Mental Health First
- The Role of Learning Support Assistants and Teachers Working with Students with Individual Needs
- Effectively Working with Non-Funded Students with Special Needs (2 staff)
- Protecting the Safety of Children and Young People
- Network Meetings for Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Student Disability (1 staff)
- Early Literacy Program (2 staff)
- University of Melbourne Network of Schools (3 staff)
- Henry V Inspirational Leadership (2 staff)
- ACLE National Conference (6 staff)
- Writing – the role of vocabulary, grammar and real literature in improving literacy outcomes
- Writing – Scaffolding Literacy (2staff)
- Writing – Quality Literature
- Equip (2 staff)
- Restorative Practices
- Working Memory

In addition to the above, staff regularly undertook onsite professional development sessions on the following topics:

- Child Safety
- General capabilities in the Australian Curriculum
- Supporting students with disabilities
- Visible Learning practices
- Working with students from refugee backgrounds
- Spiritual development – Growing Deep
- Psychologically healthy schools practices
- Working with translators and interpreters
- Teaching Science

# Student Body

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## Composition

There were 95 children enrolled at the time of the Australian Government Census in August. The census showed the following demographics:

Year	Number
P	17
1	14
2	15
3	13
4	12
5	9
6	15

In 2017:

- The student body consisted of 52 girls and 43 boys
- 81% of the children lived in families with language backgrounds other than English
- 0% of enrolments were Indigenous students
- Students identified as SWANS (Students With Additional Needs – both funded and non-funded) received additional support through provision of program support staff, individual learning plans, program support meetings, and individual and small group lessons with our Special Education teacher and onsite Speech Therapist.

## Attendance

In 2017, students in grades 1-6 attended 191 days of educational instruction while students in Prep attended 185 days of instruction. The average attendance rate for 2017 was 95%. Students attend school Monday to Friday during term time from 8.45am to 3pm each day.

Sunshine Christian School recognises the clearly established link between low levels of student absenteeism and high levels of student achievement. The school takes great care to ensure accuracy in attendance records and all student absences are followed up.

The following measures are in place at Sunshine Christian School to support high levels of student attendance:

- Records of student attendance are kept in an online database and rolls are taken daily
- Reasons for absences are expected to be supplied by parents or guardians
- Unexplained absenteeism is followed up with a phone call and contact with parents or guardians
- All notes and doctors' certificates concerning absences are kept in office archives
- The principal informs parents of emerging attendance issues at regular intervals and meets with parents to deal with cases of ongoing absenteeism and late arrival to school
- School newsletters regularly include information about the importance of school attendance



The chart below shows student attendance by year level.

<b>Year level</b>	<b>Enrolments</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
<b>P</b>	17	95%
<b>1</b>	14	93%
<b>2</b>	15	95%
<b>3</b>	13	95%
<b>4</b>	12	93%
<b>5</b>	9	97%
<b>6</b>	15	96%

# Student Outcomes in National Literacy and Numeracy Testing

Each year, students in Years 3 and 5 are required to sit NAPLAN tests. Sunshine Christian School encourages all students in Years 3 and 5 to participate, including those in receipt of Government funding for learning disabilities and those with English as an Additional Language background.

The table below shows the percentage of students at or above national benchmarks in NAPLAN 2017.

Domain	Year 3	Year 5
Reading	100%	100%
Writing	100%	100%
Spelling	100%	100%
Grammar and Punctuation	100%	100%
Numeracy	93%	100%

## Community Satisfaction

### **Students**

The school principal regularly works to build positive and supportive relationships with all students in order to maintain a detailed understanding of student concerns and issues. The principal maintains an active teaching load in order to foster good communication between staff and students. Students are also represented by student leaders and a student council which provides feedback to school staff.

### **Staff**

All staff regularly meet with the principal to formulate professional learning plans and reflect on their practice. Sunshine Christian School enjoys the service of many long standing and experienced staff members. Leaving staff participate in exit interviews which provide valuable feedback. In 2018 staff will participate in an externally led satisfaction survey.

### **Communities**

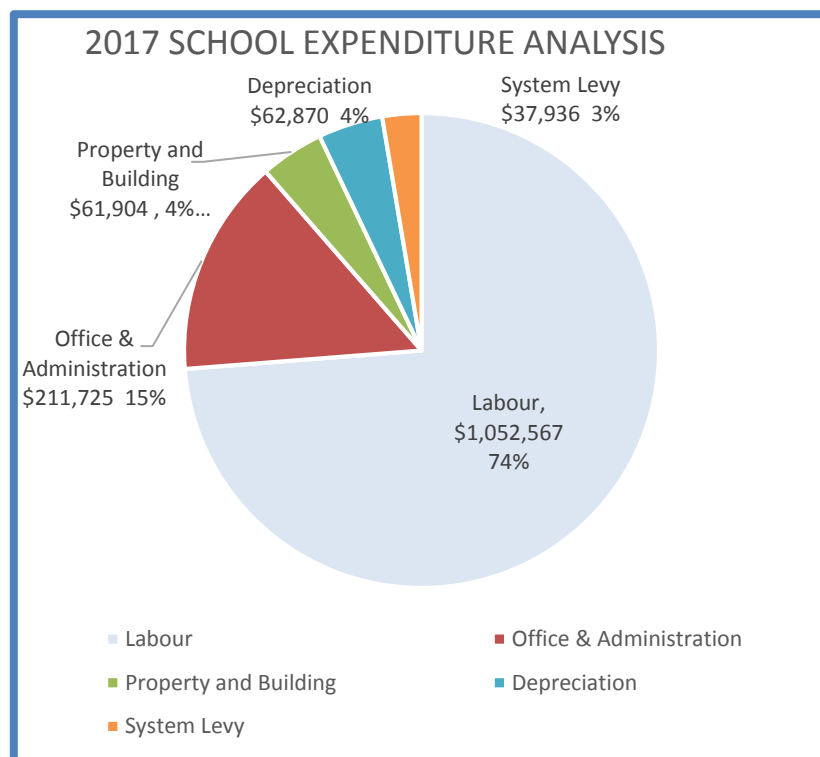
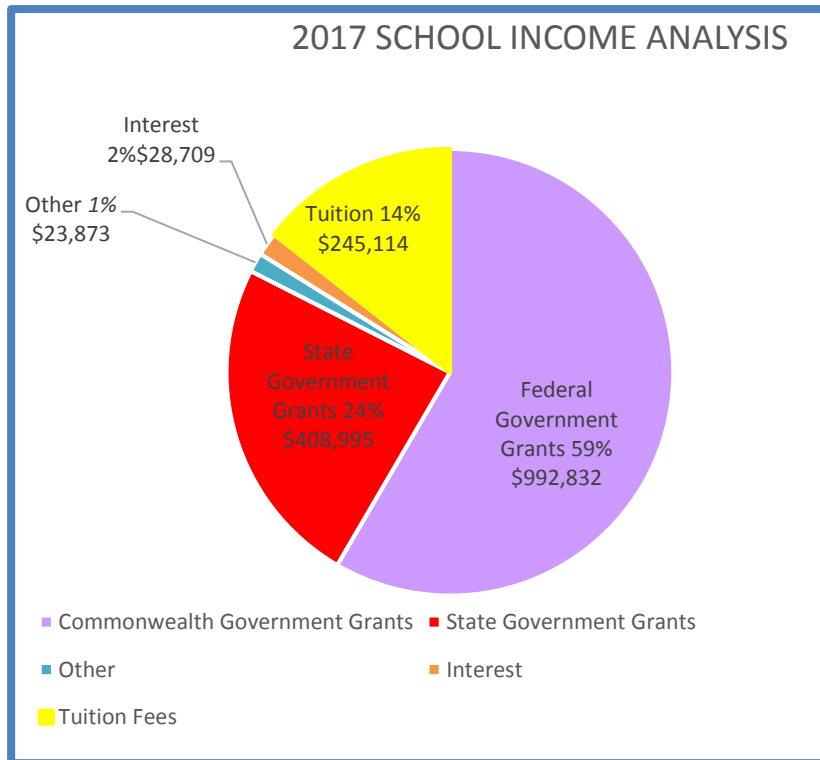
The principal has an open door policy and habitually makes himself available in the yard before and after school to allow parents to provide feedback. The school secretary builds excellent relationships with parents and students which creates an additional channel for feedback to the school. The school pastor and chaplain also seek to greet all families once per week. Teachers see parents daily as students are collected from classrooms at the end of the day.

The principal regularly undertakes consultation with parents, both formally and informally, regarding new and current initiatives. Families leaving our community meet with the principal to provide exit feedback.

The school takes its high student retention rate and lengthening waiting lists for enrolments at all year levels as indicative of a high level of community satisfaction with the school.

In 2018 parents will participate in an externally led satisfaction survey.

# Financial Performance





## **Sunshine Christian School**

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